

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 053090
ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SIG-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 INR-07 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 PC-01 SS-15 NSC-05 PM-04 /062 R

DRAFTED BY AF/C:EMARKS:GJB
APPROVED BY AF/C:TRBUCHANAN
-----100307Z 096508 /62

O 100220Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 053090

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG

SUBJECT: CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE - BORDER ATTACK ON
ZAIRE

FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE ON BORDER ATTACK
ON ZAIRE WHICH BEGAN MARCH 8. WASHINGTON POST AT LEAST
AWARE OF DEVELOPMENTS SO STORY SHOULD BREAK TOMORROW
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MORNING MARCH 10.)

CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE - AMERICAN MISSIONARIES IN ZAIRE

BACKGROUND

SEVEN AMERICAN METHODIST MISSIONARIES IN ZAIRE HAVE

REPORTEDLY BEEN PLACED IN HOUSE ARREST BY ARMED INVADERS WHO ATTACKED ZAIRE ON MARCH 8.

- THE MISSIONARIES LIVE IN THE TOWN OF KAPANGA, IN WESTERN SHABA REGION NEAR THE ANGOLAN BORDER. OTHER MISSIONARIES IN THE GENERAL AREA (POSSIBLY ANOTHER DOZEN PLUS 2 PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS) HAVE REPORTED NO CONTACT WITH THE INVADERS YET AND ARE STILL IN RADIO CONTACT WITH THEIR HEADQUARTERS IN LUBUMBASHI.

THE AREA IN SHABA REGION OF ZAIRE CURRENTLY BEING OCCUPIED OR ATTACKED BY AN ARMED FORCE FROM ANGOLA HAS BEEN SINCE THE EARLY PART OF THIS CENTURY A CENTER OF AMERICAN METHODIST MISSIONAL ACTIVITY. THERE IS A MISSIONARY HOSPITAL IN SANDOA AND A DISPENSARY NETWORK THROUGHOUT THE AREA. THE HOSPITAL WAS FOUNDED BY THE BROTHER OF THE FOUNDER OF PIPER AIRCRAFT AROUND THE TIME OF WORLD WAR I.

THIS AREA IS THE TERRITORY OF THE LUNDA PEOPLE, WHOSE MOST FAMOUS SON WAS MOISE TSHOMBE.

QUESTION: IS IT TRUE THAT AMERICAN MISSIONARIES IN ZAIRE HAVE BEEN CAPTURED BY SOLDIERS INVADING ZAIRE FROM ANGOLA?

ANSWER: REPORTS FROM ZAIRE ARE COMING IN BUT THEY ARE STILL SHORT OF DETAIL. WE ARE IN CONTACT WITH THE METHODIST MISSION HEADQUARTERS IN ZAIRE AND THEY REPORT THAT SOME OF THEIR PEOPLE IN THE TOWN
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OF KAPANGA, SHABA REGION, ZAIRE HAVE BEEN PLACED IN DETENTION IN THEIR OWN HOUSES. OTHER METHODIST MISSIONARIES IN THE AREA REPORT THEY HAVE NOT SEEN THE INVADERS AND ARE REMAINING IN RADIO CONTACT WITH THEIR HEADQUARTERS.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE US GOVERNMENT DOING TO PROTECT THESE MISSIONARIES?

ANSWER: AS YOU WILL APPRECIATE, THIS AREA IS QUITE FAR OFF THE BEATEN PATH. WE HAVE A CONSULATE IN THE REGIONAL CAPITAL, LUBUMBASHI, WHICH IS LOCATED ABOUT 500 MILES FROM THE TOWNS OF KAPANGA AND SANDOA WHERE THE MISSIONARIES ARE LOCATED. BOTH THE CONSULATE AND OUR EMBASSY IN KINSHASA ARE IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE MISSIONARY HEADQUARTERS. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE ARE ALSO IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT. AS SOON AS WE HAVE MORE INFORMATION,

WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DETERMINE
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

QUESTION: WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE REPORTED
INVASION OF ZAIRE FROM ANGOLA?

ANSWER: WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY ZAIRIAN AUTHORITIES
THAT AN ARMED MILITARY FORCE HAS ENTERED THE ZAIRIAN
TOWNS LOCATED ON OR NEAR THE EASTERN BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES. THE INTRUDERS APPARENTLY ENTERED ZAIRE

ON MARCH 8. REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE INVADERS ARE
PRESENTLY OCCUPYING THE ZAIRIAN TOWNS OF KAPANGA,
DILOLO AND KISENGE ALL OF WHICH - IF YOU CHECK A MAP -
YOU WILL FIND IN THE TRIANGLE FORMED BY ANGOLA'S
NORTH-EASTERN BORDER WITH ZAIRE.

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QUESTION: WHAT IS THE US REACTION TO THIS ATTACK ON
ZAIRE? WHAT ARE WE DOING TO HELP ZAIRE?

ANSWER: WE ARE, OF COURSE, VERY CONCERNED BY THIS MOUNTING
EVIDENCE OF AGGRESSION AGAINST A FRIENDLY AFRICAN STATE,
AND ARE FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CLOSELY TO SEE IN WHAT
WAY WE MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN RESTORING PEACE TO THE AREA.

QUESTION: ARE THEY ANY AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE
AREA UNDER ATTACK?

ANSWER: YES, THERE ARE ABOUT 20 AMERICAN METHODIST
MISSIONARIES IN THAT PART OF ZAIRE, PLUS TWO PEACE
CORPS VOLUNTEERS.

QUESTION: ARE THEY IN ANY DANGER?

ANSWER: (SEE CONTINGENCY BRIEFING ON MISSIONARIES).

QUESTION: THE "INVADERS" ARE SAID TO BE MAINLY FORMER
MEMBERS OF THE KATANGA GENDARMERIE WHO FLED
TO ANGOLA IN THE SIXTIES. ARE THEY BEING
USED BY ANGOLA, OR BY DISAFFECTED ZAIRIANS
WITH ANGOLAN HELP, TO RECLAIM THEIR PROVINCE?

ANSWER: WE DO NOT KNOW THE COMPOSITION OF THE FORCES
THAT ARE SAID TO BE CONDUCTING THESE INCURSIONS?

QUESTION: ARE CUBAN TROOPS INVOLVED?

ANSWER: WE DO NOT KNOW.

QUESTION: THE ATTACK PRESUMABLY TOOK PLACE WITH THE
ACQUIESCENCE IF NOT INSTIGATION OF THE SOVIETS.

IS THIS A CHALLENGE TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION

ANSWER: WE HAVE NO BASIS FOR SPECULATING ABOUT SOVIET
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INVOLVEMENT OR MOTIVATION.

QUESTION; LAST FEBRUARY 24 ANGOLAN PRESIDENT NETO
CHARGED THAT ZAIRE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR
CONTINUING ATTACKS ON AREAS IN NORTHERN
ANGOLAN AND THAT ZAIRE IN COLLUSION WITH US

MILITARY PERSONNEL, WAS PREPARING A MAJOR
ATTACK ON CABINDA FOR LATER THIS YEAR. ON
FEBRUARY 26 ANGOLA CHARGED ZAIRE WITH
RESPONSIBILITY FOR A "MASSACRE" INVOLVING
SOME 43 DEAD IN A TOWN IN NORTHERN ANGOLA,
AND A HIGH ANGOLAN OFFICIAL (LUCIO LARA)
INDICATED ANGOLA MIGHT RETALIATE.

IS WHAT IS NOW OCCURING ANGOLA'S RETALIATION
AGAINST ZAIRE? IS THE US INVOLVED IN ANY WAY
IN THIS SITUATION?

ANSWER: WE DO NOT KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY
REPORTED TO BE TAKING PLACE ON ANGOLA'S EASTERN BORDER
WITH ZAIRE. FROM WHAT WE KNOW OF NETO'S CHARGES, THE
PLACES IN ZAIRE FROM WHICH HE SAID INCURSIONS INTO ANGOLA
ARE BEING MOUNTED ARE ALONG THE NORTHERN BORDER BETWEEN
THE TWO COUNTRIES, NOT THE EASTERN BORDER. THE US IS NOT
INVOLVED IN ANY WAY IN THIS SITUATION. NO US MILITARY
PERSONNEL OR ANY OTHER PERSONS CONNECTED WITH THE US
GOVERNMENT IN ANY WAY, ARE INVOLVED IN PLANNING OR
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PART OF ANGOLA. I WOULD NOTE THAT BOTH PRESIDENT CARTER
AND SECRETARY VANCE HAVE INDICATED THEIR INTEREST IN
FINDING WAYS TO MOVE TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF OUR
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QUESTION: DO THESE DEVELOPMENTS INTERFERE OR THREATEN
THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS
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ANSWER: SUCH CHARGES DO NOT HELP THE PROCESS OF
NORMALIZATION.

QUESTION: WHAT ABOUT REPORTS THAT THERE IS ALSO SOME
MILITARY ACTIVITY ON ZAIRE'S BORDER WITH
UGANDA. IS THIS A SQUEEZE PLAY AGAINST
ZAIRE? IS AMIN TRYING TO DISTRACT
ATTENTION FROM HIS INTERNAL SITUATION?

ANSWER: WE CANNOT CONFIRM REPORTS OF ACTIVITY ALONG
THE ZAIRE-UGANDA BORDER.
VANCE

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ORIGIN AF-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY AF/C:RLKATES:GJB

APPROVED BY AF/C:TRBUCHANAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 053090

FOL RPT STATE 053090 ACTION KINSHASA LUSAKA DAR ES SALAAM
LAGOS LISBON NAIROBI ADDIS ABABA BRUSSELS PARIS LONDON MAPUTO
MOSCOW CAPE TOWN 10 MAR 77 QUOTE

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VANCE

UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: THE PRESS, GUIDANCE INSTRUCTIONS, INVASIONS
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE053090
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EMARKS:GJB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770081-1017
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From: STATE
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3148641
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE - BORDER ATTACK ON ZAIRE FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE ON BORDER
TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG
To: KINSHASA LUSAKA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bef43dba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009